

REMARKS

Previously pending claims 1-15 have been canceled. New claims 16-57 have been added and are believed to define over the cited Strong reference.

Claims 16-31 and 36-51 are directed to methods for renting a rental vehicle. More specifically, these claims are directed to methods associated with initiating a rental transaction. Strong is concerned solely with processes relating to vehicle return. There is no teaching or suggestion in Strong for performing initial vehicle rental transactions in the manner claimed.

Claims 32-35 are also directed to a method for renting a rental vehicle. More specifically, these claims are directed to a process for vehicle rental return. While Strong is directed to a similar subject, the process in Strong differs from that claimed by the Applicants. More particularly, in Strong the return transceiver system poles for vehicles in a restricted area return zone. Vehicles present in that return zone then answer the poling message. As discussed earlier in prosecution, this poling message based system as taught by Strong can present a number of practical difficulties including a restriction to obtaining information from a certain zone area and a concern over multiple vehicles each attempting to respond in a manner that interferes with each other. In the claimed invention, however, each vehicle is responsible for initiating its own transmission of rental information when it returns from the lot. If the system receives the transmission, an acknowledgment is sent and the vehicle can then inhibit further transmission. This method solves both of the concerns noted above with respect to the Strong system. The claimed method further emphasizes an architecture difference in that the Applicants= vehicles must be intelligent enough to not only recognize when they have been

CUSTOMER NO. 23932

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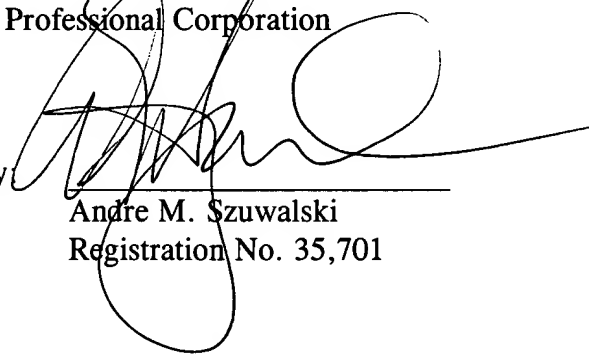
returned (and thus initiate communication), but also to respond appropriately to the acknowledgment (so as to not interfere with the transmissions of other vehicles). There is no teaching or suggestion in Strong for the claimed method of rental vehicle return.

New claims 52-57 are directed to a method for managing rental vehicles. The claimed process includes operational steps which monitor vehicle movement between stations which a rental lot and record that movement in response to remotely communicated information received from the rental vehicles. It does not appear that such a method is taught or suggested by Strong.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for favorable action and allowance.

Respectfully submitted,
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